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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KINSHASA 001215

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SUBJECT: CHARGE'S OCTOBER 18 MEETING WITH THE FOREIGN
MINISTER: WILL ANTIPAS MBUSA REMAIN IN THE
KABILA GOVERNMENT?

REF: A. (A) KINSHASA 1171
[1](#)B. (B) STATE 142614

Classified By: Charge SBrock: Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Foreign Minister displayed little knowledge of the objectives and aspirations of President Kabila's upcoming official visit to the U.S. He even wondered aloud if he would remain in the government after the long-expected cabinet reshuffle, which many observers believe will come before the end of the year. Mbusa and Charge covered a wide range of topics, including sexual violence in the DRC, the conflict in the east of the country, and mining sector reform. Normally ebullient and forthcoming, Mbusa was withdrawn and admitted to not being well informed. His fear of being shuffled out of the government may prove to be well founded. End summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Charge d'Affaires Brock hosted Antipas Mbusa, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and at a working breakfast October 18. Also present was political counselor David Brown.

Sexual violence

[1](#)3. (SBU) Charge began the conversation by thanking Mbusa for the warm reception he had received at the ministry on October 1 from Vice-Minister Alain Lubamba (acting for Mbusa, who was at the UN General Assembly), who gave assurances that the DRC would fully support U.S. efforts at the UNGA to obtain a resolution condemning the use of rape as an instrument of state policy. Mbusa acknowledged he had not heard of the U.S. initiative and asked for more information. Charge also proposed that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the U.S. Embassy work together to commemorate the "International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women" (ref B). Mbusa agreed and promised to stay in touch with us on ideas for joint efforts to mark this day. Mbusa, who is from the east of the Congo where sexual violence is most pronounced, noted that mass rape is a serious problem with armed groups in the east and evinced embarrassment over the fact that government troops are also to blame.

Kabila's trip to Washington

[1](#)4. (C) Mbusa turned to the upcoming trip to Washington by President Joseph Kabila. He asked what we expected from the

trip. Charge said the USG would emphasize three areas: satisfaction over the DRC's transition to constitutional democracy and the strengthening of the country's institutions, a more intense economic partnership, and the situation in the east. Mbusa said the visit would dispel the doubts of many here about U.S. support for the DRC. He agreed with the Charge that many of the Congo's problems are a result of the collapse of the state. He expressed anger over a "diatribe" carried by French International Radio (RFI) of recent statements in the U.S. by Azarias Ruberwa, attending a conference at an American university, acknowledging, however, that much of what Ruberwa (a prominent Tutsi politician who served as a vice-president in the transition government) had said was true.

15. (C) Charge asked Ruberwa what the Congolese are expecting from the trip. Mbusa, whose uneasy, rambling patter belied a lack of familiarity of Kabila's views, answered: (a) support for the peace process and help in expanding state authority; and (b) cooperation with the DRC in the creation of wealth here, especially in the mining sector.

That knotty Nkunda problem

16. (C) The conversation moved to Nkunda. Charge asked Mbusa for his thoughts on how to facilitate the renegade general's departure. Were there any countries other than South Africa willing to receive Nkunda? Mbusa cited Ethiopia as a possibility. Charge noted that legal advice was needed to know if the government that takes him is obligated to honor a Congolese extradition request, particularly if no extradition treaty exists between the DRC and the receiving country.

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Mbusa said that Kabila's public statements against lifting the arrest warrant would make it difficult to persuade Nkunda to leave.

Just as knotty FDLR problem

17. (SBU) Mbusa said the proposal for FDLR repatriation or resettlement now with Kigali was drafted by him at Kabila's request. Church groups in North and South Kivu are working with a Norwegian NGO to stand up a program to implement the program. Plans for a conference of FDLR leaders (to include the insurgency's not-criminal political representatives) are moving forward. Rwanda and the DRC have agreed to participate. The time frame will most likely be moved back into November from the hoped for October 22-24 date. (Note: Post forwarded the DRC plan for FDLR repatriation/resettlement to AF. End note.) On DDR, Mbusa also noted that the head of the defense ministry's new DDR unit is prepared to resign because of frustrated over a lack of international funding.

Kabila's future travel; China

18. (C) Mbusa believes Kabila is likely to visit Russia in the near future. China and India should follow. Mbusa said Kabila's India trip would include the signing of an assistance protocol. Mbusa asked for U.S. advice on dealing with China. Charge noted that China's overarching interest at present is in securing raw materials. The DRC should use its vast resources to better advantage. He suggested that the government might contract with specialized firms for a national survey of mineral wealth and then award mining concessions on the basis of a specific area's estimated value, rather than on imprecise barter agreements as those signed recently with China. The disadvantages of such agreements, in addition to their lack of transparency and appearance of possible corruption, were that the DRC could be selling its mineral resources at prices below market value. This was similar to colonial trade arrangements. Charge

noted that in time China will probably adhere to current trade agreements and structures because failure to do so could result in the loss of markets in developed countries. Mbusa said he had not been briefed on details of the China agreements and asked where the GDRC could find the expertise needed to conduct a nationwide mineral survey. Charge offered to help him locate firms and stated that the World Bank might be able to finance this kind of project.

Rumors; cabinet reshuffle

19. (C) Pol counselor asked Mbusa about a recent trip to Harare by presidential advisor Augustin Katumba and a delegation that included defense minister Chiquez, Katanga military region commander Padiri, and Central Bank president Masongu. Mbusa did not respond. The delegation was scheduled to visit Luanda after Harare; Mbusa was not sure if it had done so. Mbusa asserted that oil minister Mende is erratic; his disorganization "had confused the situation with Angola and Uganda. Although a PPRD member, he is not close to Kabila." Charge asked about a long-awaited cabinet reshuffle. Mbusa was jarringly frank: "I am not anxious for the reshuffle to take place as I might not remain in the government."

Comment

10. (C) Mbusa was not his normal ebullient and forthcoming self. When asked if he knew when Kabila is returning to Kinshasa (he was in Goma earlier in the week and has since traveled to Katanga), he said he did not know. He would not even say that he was going to Washington and we do not have (it is now Friday afternoon) a request for a visa to depart with Kabila and the delegation on Monday, although his 30 day visa to attend the General Assembly may still be valid. It was evident that the presidency is keeping close hold on the trip and that Mbusa was speaking in a personal capacity throughout the meeting. The foreign minister has been a major player in the Kabila government's many diplomatic

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initiatives vis-a-vis the DRC's neighbors, an effort which have resulted in closer ties with Angola and Uganda and, to a lesser extent, with Rwanda. He does not appear to be involved, however, with the Washington trip. And he is also on the outside re Kabila's plans to defeat the Nkunda insurgency in the east, a conflict that impinges greatly on DRC-Rwanda relations and has a high UN content. When the reshuffle occurs, we would not be surprised if Mbusa is dealt a poor hand. End comment.
BROCK